



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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## JUSTIFY 'BREATHING FIRE' TRAINING TOWARDS TRIPLE CROWN SWEEP

**LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Friday, June 1, 2018)** – Undefeated Kentucky Derby (Grade I) and Preakness Stakes (GI) winner **Justify** schooled in the starting gate and galloped about 1 1/8 miles Friday morning at Churchill Downs as he prepares for a sweep of the Triple Crown in the June 9 Belmont Stakes (GI).

"He's just breathing fire out there," trainer **Bob Baffert**'s assistant **Jimmy Barnes** said. "You can tell he's feeling full of himself. He's happy with what he's doing and that's most important. He is getting fitter and fitter each day. He has a solid foundation under him now and I think he's ready to take the big step forward."

Justify is scheduled to gallop Saturday and Sunday during the exclusive training period for Belmont Stakes contenders at 7:30 a.m. (all times Eastern) and breeze Monday, according to Barnes.

While Justify cooled off from his Friday training, stablemate **Restoring Hope**, the third-place finisher in the Wood Memorial (GII), galloped 1 1/2 miles in preparation for the Belmont Stakes.

In other local Belmont Stakes news, Breeders Futurity (GI) winner **Free Drop Billy** galloped 1 1/2 miles for trainer **Dale Romans** while trainer **Steve Asmussen**'s Preakness third **Tenfold** galloped nearly two miles and is scheduled to breeze Saturday.

Preakness runner-up **Bravazo** walked trainer **D. Wayne Lukas**' shedrow following his one-mile breeze in 1:42.60 Thursday.

Only 12 horses have swept the Triple Crown: **Sir Barton** (1919), **Gallant Fox** (1930), **Omaha** (1935), **War Admiral** (1937), **Whirlaway** (1941), **Count Fleet** (1943), **Assault** (1946), **Citation** (1948), **Secretariat** (1973), **Seattle Slew** (1977), **Affirmed** (1978) and, most recently, the Baffert-trained **American Pharoah** (2015).

The Belmont Stakes field could possibly be comprised of the following 12 horses (with jockey/trainer): **Bandua** (TBD/Dermot Weld), **Blended Citizen** (Kyle Frey/Doug O'Neill), **Bravazo** (Luis Saez/Lukas), **Free Drop Billy** (Robby Albarado/Romans), **Gronkowski** (Jose Ortiz/Chad Brown), **Hofburg** (Irada Ortiz Jr./Bill Mott), **Justify** (Mike Smith/Baffert), **Noble Indy** (Javier Castellano/Todd Pletcher), **Restoring Hope** (Florent Geroux/Baffert), **Seahenge** (Ryan Moore/Aidan O'Brien), **Tenfold** (Ricardo Santana Jr./Asmussen) and **Vino Rosso** (John Velazquez/Pletcher).

To watch Justify's Friday gallop visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NABVBeWHMyc>.

For complementary Belmont Stakes past performances courtesy of Brisnet.com, visit <http://www.brisnet.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/BelmontStakes18.pdf>.

**FANS CAN WATCH JUSTIFY TRAIN IN PERSON OR ONLINE** – With unbeaten Triple Crown hopeful **Justify** and four other possible Belmont Stakes contenders stabled on the grounds, Churchill Downs Racetrack is conducting a special 7:30-7:40 a.m. (all times Eastern) training period for those horses.

Area horse racing fans are invited to watch those colts train from the first floor of the facility free of charge. Churchill Downs Racetrack will open its Paddock Gate entrance between 7-8 a.m. each morning so the public can watch Kentucky Derby and Preakness winner Justify along with rivals **Bravazo**, **Free Drop Billy**, **Restoring Hope** and **Tenfold** prepare for the 1 1/2-mile third jewel of horse racing's Triple Crown – the 150<sup>th</sup> running of the \$1.5 million Belmont Stakes (Grade I) on Saturday, June 9.

Guests may park free of charge in the Orange and Black Lots outside of the Paddock Gate.

Video of the exercises will be shown on the Big Board and infield video screens at Churchill Downs. Those unable to attend can watch an online live stream of the daily exercises with commentary on the Kentucky Derby Facebook ([www.facebook.com/KentuckyDerby](http://www.facebook.com/KentuckyDerby)), Twitter ([www.twitter.com/kentuckyderby](http://www.twitter.com/kentuckyderby)) and at [www.KentuckyDerby.com/Works](http://www.KentuckyDerby.com/Works) from 7:20-7:45 a.m., thanks to **TwinSpires.com**, the country's leading online and mobile betting platform and official betting partner of Churchill Downs, the Kentucky Derby and Breeders' Cup World Championships. Also, clips of the activity will be uploaded on the Kentucky Derby YouTube channel.

**VAN BERG LEGACY CONTINUES WITH FINAL YEARLINGS PURCHASED AT THE SALE** – On Dec. 27, 2017, the racing world lost legendary trainer **Jack Van Berg**. Now, Van Berg's son, **Tom**, is hoping to give fans a lasting memory of his father by syndicating the last six horses the Hall of Fame conditioner selected at the Keeneland September Yearling Sale.

"In September, Dad came to me and said we should go to Keeneland to buy some horses for prospective clients," Tom said. "He picked out 10 really nice yearlings."

However, there was a small issue. Van Berg did not have any prospective clients to buy the horses.

"We had a little problem on our hands but, as always, Dad was confident we'd find clients to buy the horses," Tom joked. "I took three horses and syndicated them to some people I know to take them off his hands. Then, one of our regular clients bought a fourth. We were left with six horses."

"(Trainer) **Carl Deville** breaks all of our yearlings and Dad and Carl had been friends for a long time. Dad had this trailer that he bought for about \$20,000 that he was going to sell to Carl. But, instead of exchanging money, he told Carl to just pay for the training.

"Dad passed away on Dec. 27 and two days later I got a call from Carl saying the money ran out from the trailer."

Deville finished breaking the now 2-year-olds and sent them to Tom's string of horses at Churchill Downs.

"When we got the horses in I thought it would be a cool idea to name them after some of Dad's famous sayings or things people knew him by," Tom said. "For example, Dad always had these Atomic Fireball candy in his truck that he would give out to girls to watch their reaction when they ate them. So, we decided to name one **Jack's Fire Balls**. He also used to say, 'If I tell you it's Easter, you better go paint the eggs.' One of the yearlings he picked out was by Paynter, so we named the horse **Paynt Your Eggs**. We thought this would be a fun idea that some of his fans would remember him by and they could also get involved."

For more information about buying a percentage of the final six yearlings Van Berg selected at the sale, call (502) 298-8287.

Van Berg most notably conditioned 1988 Horse of the Year and Kentucky Derby winner **Alysheba** and was inducted into racing's Hall of Fame in 1985. Van Berg closed his career with 6,523 victories with his horses earning \$85,925,482.

**SATURDAY'S 11-RACE DOWNS AFTER DARK PROGRAM TOPPED BY ARISTIDES, MIGHTY BEAU; POTENTIAL \$300,000 MANDATORY SINGLE 6 JACKPOT PAYOUT** – Downs After Dark Presented by Budweiser returns Saturday evening at Churchill Downs for an 11-race program featuring the \$100,000 Winning Colors (Grade III), \$75,000-added Mighty Beau Overnight Stakes and a potential \$300,000 mandatory payout in the Single 6 Jackpot if there's no single winning combination Friday.

The night gets underway with a first post of 6 p.m. (all times Eastern) and gates open at 5 p.m. The six-furlong Aristides, named after the inaugural Kentucky Derby winner in 1875, is carded as Race 10 with a post time of 10:42 p.m., while the five-furlong Mighty Beau, run on the Matt Winn Turf Course, is Race 11 at 11:10 p.m.

If no one hits the Single 6 Jackpot at Churchill Downs on Friday, there will be a \$300,000 mandatory Pick 6 payout on Races 4-9 Saturday night.

The Single 6 Jackpot carryover was up to a massive \$684,595 for Friday's nine-race program. The Single 6 Jackpot sequence for Friday covers Races 4-9 starting at 2:13 p.m. (all times Eastern).

The Kentucky Horse Racing Commission granted Churchill Downs written approval Thursday to payout \$300,000 from the jackpot for Saturday's 11-race card if there was a carryover heading into that night's racing program. The remaining jackpot funds would seed the Single 6 Jackpot pool for Sunday, but all funds would be paid Saturday if there is only one winning combination that night.

Saturday night's Single 6 Jackpot will span Races 4-9 starting at 7:26 p.m. with a \$30,000 claiming race for 3-year-olds and up. The sequence also features a trio of maiden special weights, including two on turf for fillies and mares; a second level allowance on dirt for 3-year-olds and up; and a first-level allowance at 1 1/16 miles for 3-year-olds that attracted Road to the Kentucky Derby point-earners **Mississippi**, **Solomini** and **Tiz Mischief**.

The night continues after the Single 6 sequence with the 30<sup>th</sup> running of the Aristides Stakes. The field from the rail out (with jockeys, assigned weights and morning line odds): **Smart Spree** (Ricardo Santana Jr., 120 pounds, 5-1); **Shadow Tracer** (Robby Albarado, 120, 20-1); Wilbo (Cabrera, 122, 9-5); **Heartwood** (Calvin Borel, 120, 15-1); **Mr. Crow** (Corey Lanerie, 120, 5-2); **Awesome Saturday** (Brian Hernandez Jr., 120, 7-2) and **Chief Cicatriz** (James Graham, 120, 6-1).

The 11<sup>th</sup>-race finale is the third running of the Mighty Beau. The field from the rail out (with jockeys, assigned weights and morning line odds): **Morticia** (Brian Hernandez Jr., 116 pounds, 9-2); **Cutler** (Melissa Zajac, 116, 50-1); **Long On Value** (Florent Geroux, 121, 2-1); **Angaston** (Shaun Bridgmohan, 116, 20-1); **Sonic Boom** (Julien Leparoux, 121, 12-1); **The Critical Way** (Adam Beschizza, 121, 15-1); **Restless Rambler** (James Graham, 121, 15-1); **Fort Fortitude** (David Cabrera, 123, 20-1); **Kid Perfect** (Ricardo Santana Jr., 121, 6-1); Hogy (Lanerie, 125, 9-5).

Morticia is expected to scratch, according to trainer **Rusty Arnold II**'s assistant **Jack Bohannon**. She also is entered in Saturday's \$100,000 Penn Ladies Dash, which is a five-furlong turf sprint for fillies and mares at Penn National.

Guests attending Churchill Downs on Saturday night are encouraged to dress in bright, neon colors for the theme "Neon Nights." To purchase tickets visit [www.churchilldowns.com/tickets](http://www.churchilldowns.com/tickets).

**DOWN THE STRETCH** – Racing at Churchill Downs continues Friday with a first post of 12:45 p.m. with a \$684,595 20-cent Single 6 Jackpot carryover. The sequence begins in Race 4 with a post time of 2:13 p.m. ... Congratulations to trainer **Eddie Kenneally** for winning Churchill Downs' Barn of the Week. Kenneally and his barn will receive a pizza party and winner's circle recognition during Friday's card. ... "**Inside Churchill Downs**" will air Friday at 6 p.m. on **ESPN 680/105.7** featuring TwinSpires.com handicapper **Ed DeRosa**, who will dissect Saturday night's Churchill Downs card. Those outside the Louisville radio market can listen live online at <http://www.espnlouisville.com/> or via podcast on the station's website or <https://soundcloud.com/>.

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